



SPOTLIGHT ON HEALTH

A Mouthful Of Facts About Dry Mouth

(NAPSA)—Most people have never heard of the condition called xerostoma and yet as many as 80 percent of adults may suffer from this condition, also known as dry mouth.

Although many people suffering from dry mouth may not know they have it, the condition can cause long-term damage to teeth and oral tissues.

Common symptoms include cracking lips, changes in tongue texture, increased sensitivity of mouth tissues and noticeable dryness in the mouth.

These symptoms can cause difficulties in breathing, speaking, eating, bad breath, gum disease and cavities.

Ninety-five percent of all people with dry mouth have some degree of periodontal disease, ranging from mild to severe.

Diseases that can cause dry mouth include lupus, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis and Sjogren's syndrome. More than 400 drugs can cause dry mouth, including commonly prescribed anti-depressants, antihistamines and a host of other over-the-counter medications.

Saliva protects the oral environment in part by neutralizing acids and killing harmful germs and bacteria that enter the mouth. It is the first defense against such harmful microorganisms. Without this natural defense, the teeth can erode because of an overabundance of destructive bacteria.

People with diabetes have one of the highest levels of gum disease in the world and their oral tissue heals slowly, which allows harmful



Specially formulated products can replicate and replenish the body's salivary enzymes.

bacteria to grow.

Fortunately, there are ways to alleviate dry mouth besides water and gum. A solution that has become increasingly popular is the use of specially formulated products that contain natural salivary enzymes to boost the body's oral defense system.

For example, the Lactoperoxidase system, pioneered by Laclede, Inc., contains three enzymes that work together to reduce harmful bacteria in the mouth.

The system's products come in five forms. Biotene Dry Mouth Toothpaste, Biotene Alcohol-Free Mouthwash, Biotene sugar-free gum, Oralbalance moisturizing gel and new Biotene Denture Grip can be used in combination or singularly to customize a dry mouth treatment system based on the level of oral dryness.

For more information about the symptoms and treatment of dry mouth, including a list of medications that can cause it, visit www.laclede.com.